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Student returns humanity to PVAMU.

See **Habitat** on page 7

THE PANTHER

April 14, 2000

Vol. 77 No. 13



The Official Student Newspaper of Prairie View A & M University

Scholarship pageant filled with celestial fantasy

Jo Carolyn Goode
Panther Staff

Time stood still in Pantherland as a new queen of the royal throne was crowned.

The 31st Miss Prairie View A&M University Scholarship Pageant was held last night. The annual pageant was sponsored by the Office of Student Activities and Leadership.

Under the theme "Celestial Fantasy," the master and mistress of ceremonies, Lance Berry and LeTrice Dickerson, guided the audience through a world full of peace, love and happiness.

The cream of the crop adorned the William Billy Nicks stage in the form of six of the most beautiful, talented and intelligent women



Kimberly Pierson,
Miss Prairie
View 2000-2001

of Prairie View.

Amber Farmer, Aurysia Blanks, Kimberly Pierson, Tierasha Manual, Enryka Payton, and Jennifer Rollins presented a tough decision for the three man and two woman panel of judges for the night's competition.

The contestants and the current Miss Prairie View, Shiressa Pittman competed in the various areas of talent, swimsuit, evening gown, impromptu question and answer, and private interview competitions.

Entertainment was

provided by a variety of Prairie View students.

Cecily Wagner sang, "Vision of Love," while the Classic Dance Ensemble, dressed in simple black and white, wished they knew the feeling of being free.

Other vocal and instrumental talents were provided by Full of Grooves and the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia fraternity.

Before the announcement of the royal court of 2000-2001, several awards were presented to the contestants.

A plaque for Miss Congeniality was awarded to Blanks, the Most Ads Sold award was won by Payton, the Best Swimsuit recognition went to Manual, Farmer took the Best Evening Gown award and tied with Pierson for Best Talent. The Best Private Interview plaque was presented to Pierson.

The second runner-up for the pageant was Hempstead's Manual while Farmer walked away with the first runner-up title.

The title of Miss Prairie View A&M University, a \$1,200 wardrobe allowance and \$3,000 scholarship belonged to Pierson by the end of the night.

Pierson is a 21-year-old Mass Communication major from Texarkana, Texas.

During her reign, she plans to implement programs that enforce her platform of spirituality and individuality geared toward at risk students.

Pierson hopes that as Miss Prairie View, she can create a better relationship between faculty and students.

After graduation, Pierson hopes to one day be a television news anchor and own an at-risk youth center.

Houston news anchor loses battle with cancer

Ryan McGinty
Sports Editor

Longtime Channel 11 news anchor Sylvan Rodriguez died last Friday after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.

Rodriguez worked as a Houston television news journalist for 23 years, first with Channel 13 and then as a news anchor with Channel 11.

He was active in civic affairs, worked on behalf of charities and garnered many honors for his efforts in

behalf of others.

He was a news fixture in Houston since 1977, covering space and political reporting.

Rodriguez interviewed every President from Richard Nixon to George Bush.

He covered the beginnings of the NASA shuttle program, and his work on the Challenger explosion in 1987 led him to an offer from the ABC network to become a correspondent based in Los Angeles.

While in Los Angeles, Rodriguez covered from the famous and the infamous movie stars to Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega.

He also appeared on ABC World News Tonight with Peter Jennings; Nightline with Ted Koppel; The David Brinkley Show and Good Morning America.

Among his honors, Rodriguez was inducted last year into the Houston Hall of Fame, received the 2000 Communicator Award from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from The Houston Association of Hispanic Media Professionals.

In 1998 he received the Samaritan Center for Counseling Education's Community Service Samaritan Spirit Award.

Several memorial services were held throughout the week to celebrate Rodriguez's life.

The San Antonio native was buried Wednesday in his hometown.

Rodriguez is survived by his wife; two daughters, Gianna and Cristina; a son, Sylvan III; a stepson, Michael Sekula Greenberg; a stepdaughter, Elysse Sekula Greenberg; his mother and three brothers in San Antonio; and a sister in Louisiana.

The family has asked that memorial contributions be made to the Sylvan Rodriguez Foundation in care of Sterling Bank, P. O. Box 41027, Houston 77241-1027.

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System versus monopoly

Questions arise among students, parents concerning housing



Santee's Bowers
Editor-in-Chief

that seems to work its way into every conversation we have, and on a good day, almost every statement. This friend has created a personal trademark of saying "now...how does that work?"

Regardless of the situation "now...how does that work" seems to come up. After a while I picked up on the saying, often asking myself and others around me the same thing every time the opportunity presents itself and especially when it comes to attending Prairie View A&M University. Not to say that every moment I have spent here has been regretful, but for the sake of this editorial, let's say that every minute between now and then has been a learning experience.

Recently a friend of mine who attends Hampton

University e-mailed me. Just when I thought that things at PVAMU were heading in a questionable direction my friend posed the greatest and most common question I have heard in my three collegiate years.

The first thing her e-mail stated was, "why did I decide to attend a HBCU?" After sitting there for a moment and laughing at her instead of with her, my response was "I can't tell you, heck who knows why I decided to attend my HBCU."

She wrote that she unfortunately had no housing for the Fall 2000 semester.

At Hampton University the computer system sporadically chooses which students will reside on campus in the dorms. With only 12 credit hours left until graduation, she was now on the outside looking in at a system that was supposed to protect and aid her, but instead due to the luck of the draw, failed her.

My thoughts on her situation left me saying, "how does that work?"

What are students supposed to do when a system

that is created to protect them, turns on them? Or even worse turned into a monopoly that will leave most students having to pay unaffordable rent increases every year, if they have even received housing. A monopoly, with the closure of all residence halls, will allow white-owned companies like American Campus Communities, also known as Campus Community Lifestyles, and Sodhexo Mariott to infiltrate campus life and control the prices of all housing and food.

A monopoly that regardless of the location, whether it be Taco Bell, KFC, Counter Productions, Underground to Go, or the Panther Mart, will control the prices of all food served at the university.

"How does that work?" With the depreciation of quality and the value of the University Village each year, the President, housing directors, Vice-President of Student and Enrollment, general managers, along with other PVAMU staff, negotiate with American Campus Communities on prices to cover maintenance and refurbishing. The

end result- higher deposits and prices.

"How does that work?" If the quality of the apartments are going down, why is the cost of living in them going up every year?

When students return in the fall and reside in a four bedroom apartment in University Village North, they will pay \$368 a month or a total of \$1472 a month, similar to the cost of a house payment.

"How does that work?" The administration should consider the concerns of many students such as Felicia King, Ty' Rell King, Tunesia Jackson, Avione Northcutt, Jamian Lattisims, Ryan Sims, Jelani Clay, who live in L.O. Evans and formulated a petition to keep the residence dorms open.

Instead of how does this work, will this work?

On a first come first serve bases, how does the university who is "teaming for the new millennium" plan to accommodate the growing number of students each year?

But nevertheless that answer might still leave me saying, "how does that work?"

Newspaper Staff

The Panther Advisor: Dr. Kimetris Baltrip
Technical assistance provided by Gitonga M'Mbijewe

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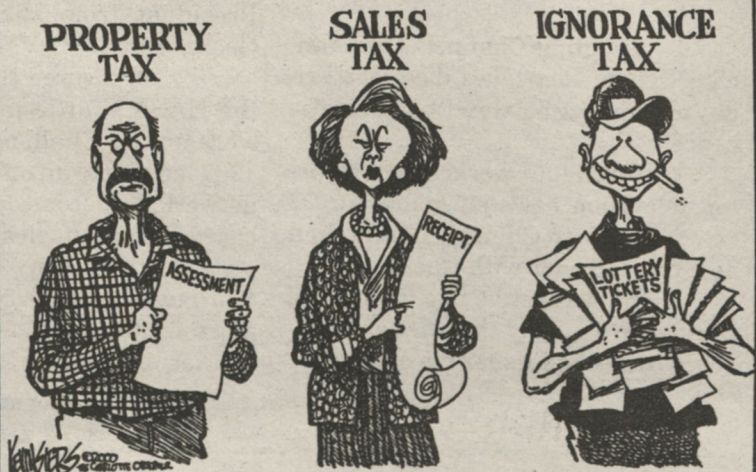
Deondra Dockery

Lance Berry
Ray "The Ranger"

Editorial Policy

The Panther is a publication supported through advertising and student activity fees. Views expressed within the publication are not necessarily those shared by Prairie View A&M University or the Texas A&M University Board of Regents.

WAYS TO FUND EDUCATION:



Question about doctor made some sick

Dear Editor,

Recently I read in the March 31 issue of The Panther, a question under 20 Questions that was quite disturbing. It was question 16 in reference to Dr. Berry. I am aware that we have freedom of speech and freedom of the press, along with other great rights in this country. However, this right should not be used for personalized, slanderous quotes that are unsigned and undocumented. When you consider the volume of patients that are seen and the different variables associated with patient care, you will have different impressions. It is inappropriate to generalize your personal experience, if that is the case, with those of others, especially when it affects one's livelihood. It is true that we all are entitled to our opinions but we must keep in mind that the public expression of opinions from those like John Rucker, Jimmy the Greek and others have proven to be very costly with severe consequences.

Respectfully submitted,

R.M. Smith, RN
Advanced Nurse Practitioner

The March 31 edition of the Panther was most disturbing, thus moving me to write this letter. I am a firm believer in freedom of speech, however when we speak we must do so with responsibility. Item 16 in your 20 Questions feature appears malicious and unfounded. To damage the reputation of a professional without supporting documentation is unconscionable.

Dr. Berry treats approximately 50 patients daily. Additionally, he serves as the team physician for the athletic department. He frequently receives accolades from patients he has treated. In addition to the student population, he provides medical service to the community, as well as weekend medical service in Houston. He is well trained and diversified.

His training in Harlem Hospital, New York, has prepared him for far more than is seen at Prairie View A&M University. We are fortunate to have a physician that by choice works in our community. Have you thought about what would happen if he were not here?

To make unfounded statements about the health center in general is understandable, however to maliciously slander an individual is totally unacceptable. It is my opinion that your column owes Dr. Berry a printed apology.

Sincerely,
T.J. Pierre, LMSW/LPC
Administrator Health Services

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my opinion of Dr. Berry's practice because both my family and I have had him as our physician for many years. He is a very good doctor who will get right down to the problem of your illness. He will help you to feel better. When my sister was ill, I had to take her to as many as five different doctors. No one would accept her as a patient but Dr. Berry. He accepted her with open arms and concern about her health. He saved her life. Not only has he seen my sister, but also my daughters. One of my daughters suffered with her pancreas and liver. Dr. Berry identified the problem when other doctors said it was gas. This diagnosis assisted in saving her life. In my opinion, Dr. Berry is an excellent doctor that you can always count on to help you feel better.

Sincerely,
Geraldine Coburn

Submission Policy for Letters to the Editor

Anyone who reads The Panther can submit a letter to the editor at P. O. Box 2876, Prairie View, TX 77446 or in the Memorial Student Center, room 114. All submissions are subject to editing and must include the author's name and telephone number.

Visit The Panther online by opening the Prairie View A&M University homepage at www.pvamu.edu and clicking on The Panther link under Student Activities.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Troubles in communication effect students

Dear Editor:

In the last issue on the front page was an article titled "Media Conference Creates a Pathway for Student Careers."

As a Communication student, I appreciate the coverage but its a disappointment that the newspaper wasn't a major highlight at the conference.

Throughout my college tenure there have been changes in the communication department including an unnecessary merge with Languages. Next, improper advisement has been a problem because professors are given too many hats to wear at the same time. The next problem is our department's computer lab is outdated along with the editing equipment in the television station. In fact a course in Media Production II was given an assignment to complete a documentary after Spring Break but with 20 plus students in the class and only two editing machines, it made no sense.

Another major problem is that our best professors are leaving. So far we have lost two, Dr. Means and Ms. Fallis. Now, our favorite secretary Ms. Jackson has moved to Delco and I don't want to lose any more professors because we have learned to love them all.

A problem with loads of controversy is the radio station, KPVM 91.3 FM that we all know and love, has no love for the students. The constant feud between the department head and the station manager is uncalled for. Most college campus radio stations are student operated so why is it that we hear no voices from students until after 10p.m.?

One of their best DJs, an undergraduate student, just recently re-signed from her GOSPEL morning show. I can't speak for the student but anyone can figure that you must be unhappy with the conditions to quit a GOSPEL morning show.

Students are not fairly represented and the fact that Channel 35 is operated by students barely gets recognition and should be looked at as an example of just how hard students work even when they are not getting paid.

The newspaper is another example of students taking care of business for the campus.

Students in the Communication department get false promises from our dean, professors, and department head.

I love communications and just want changes made. Students in communications should be heard. Students if you want change there is power in numbers.

I am not just speaking to my department but all departments; don't complain do something. SGA can't do everything but we as students who pay to keep this school running have the power to do anything.

As a voice of the students of the communication department, there needs to be changes.

The bottom line is that students need proper knowledge and the best information so students can go out into the world and enhance the knowledge gained at Prairie View A&M University and have a stable future.

Unity, teamwork and communication are the link between faculty, staff and students within all departments.

If anyone from the Communication department and other departments have concerns please support the newspaper and write your concerns to the editor. THERE NEEDS TO BE CHANGE!

A concern Student,
LaToya D. Moore

CAMPUS NEWS

School of architecture wants more for students

By Felicia Walker
Business Manager

The number of African-American architects in the United States totals about three percent of the 100,000 registered architects in the country.

As part of a national re-accreditation evaluation, Prairie View

A&M University's (PVAMU) School of Architecture hopes to become a primary Historically Black College and University (HBCU) distributor of black architects in the near future.

The National Architectural Accrediting Board team visited PVAMU April 1-5, 2000 to evaluate the school's status toward becoming the first HBCU with a five-year accreditation for graduating architect majors.

Currently the school

maintains a three-year accreditation program and is the only HBCU offering architecture in Texas.

Once the final evaluations are submitted, the new accreditation will be announced in June 2000.

The Dean of Architecture, Dr. Ikhlas Sabouni, announced the idea of a five-year accreditation program as a way for minority students to make a positive contribution to their communities and many others.

"Our program gives students the opportunity to rebuild inner cities...that also house a large number of minority families," said Dr. Sabouni.

With the appointing of a five-year accreditation program, students will be required to take a nine section architectural exam and accu-

mulate three years of internship experience to receive their architectural registration in Texas.

as general contractors or construction managers."

The National Architectural Accrediting Board team began their evaluation with an introductory banquet.

Director of Development Charles McClelland said he sees the possible accreditation as a means for the University to make a significant increase in the number of African-American architects in the U.S.

During the week long stay, it evaluated core curriculum faculty and shared lunch with several instructors.

The team interviewed and held an open forum with architectural students focusing on any student body concerns.

Also, between 50-60 student showcases and design models of bridges, skyscrapers, sketches, abstract models, and 3D images done on the department's student lap-tops were displayed.



Photo courtesy of Stephan Gage
N.A.A.B. representative speaking at forum.

tion number.

According to Dr. Sabouni, this registration will not only allow students access to self-employment in the creation of buildings, hospitals and homes, but also introduce them to higher paying jobs.

"There is not one African-American general contractor in the Houston area. Our accreditation will produce a large number of African-American architects able to receive registration without working for employers," said Dr. Sabouni.

"They will also have the opportunity to obtain

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CAMPUS NEWS

Greek olympics bring unity to campus

By Deondra Dockery
Panther Staff

On Wed., April 5, 2000, fraternities and sororities put their differences aside for the love of games, and just to have fun.

The Greek Olympics were sponsored by the ladies of the Eta Beta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Inc.

The majority of Greek organizations that exist on campus were present at the festivities.

These organizations

came out to give support and make it known that unity does exist among Greek organizations on Prairie View A&M University's campus.

The games began in the "Baby Dome" where several volleyball matches and basketball games were held.

After battling it out in the "Baby Dome," the activities moved onto the football field where running relays and a game of tug-o-war took place.

One of the goals for the Greek Olympics was not only to bring unity among or-

ganizations, but to also increase the importance of physical fitness among college students.

The Greek Olympics brought on a positive attitude among campus organizations, and was a success for DST and all of their participants.

Springfest 2000

Tentative Schedule



Tuesday

7:00 p.m. Panther-lounge (Baby dome)
8:00-10:30 p.m. Dance Concert (Hobart Taylor)

Wednesday

12:00-4:00 p.m. Fun-day (Band Field)
7:30-11:00 p.m. Casino Night (MSC Ballroom)

Thursday

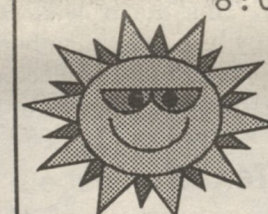
4:00-7:00 p.m. Dinner Cookout (Outside Alumni)
8:00-11:00 p.m. Fashion Show (Hobart Taylor)

Friday

8:00-1:00 p.m. Comedy Show/Baby Dome Party

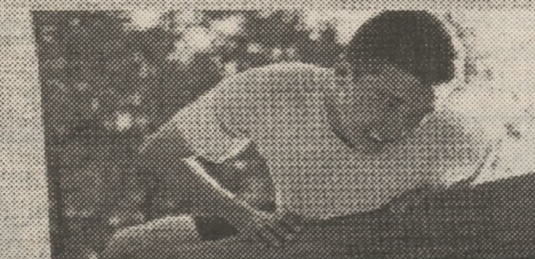
Saturday

8:00 p.m. Step Show (Baby Dome)



* Subject to Change

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REGIONAL NEWS

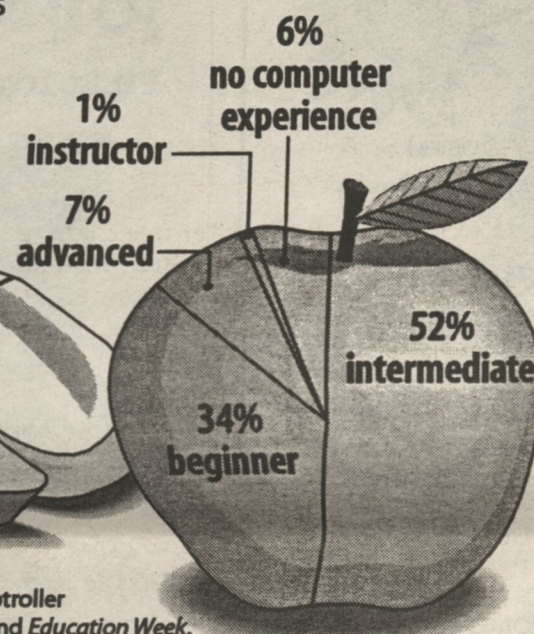


Keeping an Eye on Texas

Tech-savvy teachers fill Texas classrooms

Texas teachers are computer savvy according to a 1999 Education Week survey. In fact, 60 percent of Texas teachers have an intermediate or higher level of technology expertise. In addition, 91 percent of Texas classrooms are linked to the Internet.

Computer skills of Texas teachers in 1999:



SOURCES: Carole Keeton Rylander, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (www.window.state.tx.us) and Education Week.

African Americans tackle state capitol

Sheleah Hughes
Managing Editor

April 8 and 9, 2000 marked the 4th African American Legislative Summit.

The summit's theme "Leadership Planning for the 21st Century" allowed state representatives, senators, educational and technology leaders to combine their resources to arm the State of Texas government with necessities to tackle the new era and ever changing population of the state.

Panel discussions and brain trusts were held throughout the duration of the weekend.

These discussions that covered areas of environmental racism, utility deregulation and African American family issues allowed community members like Representative Al Edwards, Dr. Elizabeth Noel, Dean College of the Agriculture and Human Science department at Prai-

rie View A&M University, Derrick Eugene of AT&T and others the opportunity of expressing their opinions on the various topics.

Braintrusts that touched the educational side of the state, allowed presidents of UT-Dallas, Paul Quinn College, Prairie View and Texas Southern University the chance to collaborate with the commissioner of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Patricia Hayes, and address ways in which Texas will foster more inclusion of minority students in its institutions of higher education.

Other braintrusts touched on Electronic technology and overviewed where Texas stands and where it is headed in the future.

The weekend continued as Senator Rodeny Ellis was sworn in as Governor for A Day. This honor was received by him after members of the Texas Senate selected him as the third highest state official under the

See Texas on page 9

CAMPUS NEWS

What 'Flava' do you prefer? This or that?

By Candace Johnson
Panther Staff

Nine aspiring fashion designers came together along with Club Flava and the Sigma Rhomeo's to bring students of Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) the latest of fashion design on April 6, 2000.

The fashion show began with designs from Sundia Griffin who brought forth a new style of wearing jeans.

Griffin's models were dressed in bell-bottomed jeans with the legs cut out in the middle or on either side.

She also displayed her line of after five clothing that was very appealing to the audience.

The styles of Arletta Saafir included men and

women wear in earth tone and mostly African attire.

Big Baby displayed his line of what he calls new urban hip-hop attire.

This collection included men's, women's and sports wear.

He said he named his clothing line Big Baby because everyone is a Big Baby at heart.

MoMo, designed by Monique Patterson, featured tie-dye tops for the men and

women in a variety of styles and after five clothing for women.

casual and still be cool in the summertime.

Miss Thang captured the attention of the audience with her line of beach party wear and the wild west millenium style.

Her models modeled an array of tops, skirts, and pants.

She then set the mood for her after five clothing line which included tops and bottoms in animal print.

Urban hip-hop cloth-

ing was brought to a new level when Christopher George brought his designs to center stage.

George's collection was comprised of t-shirt designs in various colors and designs.

Servillo featured formal wear, sportswear, women's wear and men's wear which were all unique in design.

Finally, My Aunt Tee's clothing design for the interactive college student closed the show with a variety of shirt designs and colors.

Club Flava and Sigma Rhomeo's collaborated a successful show and should make it an annual festivity.

The show was nicely put together, and students left satisfied.



Models sport Big Baby fashions during fashion show.

Photo by Lacy Burks

Braids, Fades and Purple Kool-Aid®



Sonya Simmons making it happen.

Photo courtesy of Sonya Simmons

Student helps make it possible

Habitat for humanity returns to PVAMU

Simmons, along with senior psychology major Tonya Williams, started the PVAMU chapter in the summer of 1998.

Habitat For Humanity was founded in Americus, Ga. by Millard Fuller.

With its Christian values, the organization's mission is to eliminate impoverished housing and provide standard, decent housing for those who cannot otherwise afford it.

According to Simmons, "Habitat is truly a unique organization in that their sole purpose is to help people."

By Joyce Dixon
Panther Staff

Phi Beta Lambda, Business Information Systems Association (BISA), Delta Mu Delta Business Honor Society, Panther Advisory Leaders, Student Government Association, and the list goes on and on.

With all of these obligations it is a wonder how senior, information systems major Sonya Simmons has any time to help anyone. Yet she does.

As president of the Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) chapter of Habitat for Humanity, Simmons finds time every Saturday.

Sonya's favorite Kool-Aid®: Tropical Punch

This feature was added to give recognition to outstanding campus leaders, organizations and individuals. The Panther solicits any nominations from students, faculty and staff honorees for this section.

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This is, honestly, a fantastically successful diet. If it weren't, the US Womens' Alpine Ski Team wouldn't be permitted to use it! Right? So, give yourself the same break the US Ski team gets. Lose weight the scientific, proven way. Even if you've tried all the other diets, you owe it to yourself to try the US Womens' Alpine Ski Team Diet. That is, if you really do want to lose 20 pounds in two weeks. Order today! Tear this out as a reminder.

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TEXAS



Alumnus enlightens Ivy League with history

By Dr. Kimetris Baltrip
Special to the Panther

Eric C. Gaither was once here.

To many of you reading this article, the name above does not bring to mind someone who has national acclaim or famed repertoire.

In fact, to mention anyone who does not have a household name due to celebrity status, political clout, scandalous behavior or some other noteworthy cause is in direct violation of a basic journalism premise—do not place unfamiliar names in the lead of a story and risk detracting readers.

This attempt, however, to draw your attention by mentioning an “average” person like Eric C. Gaither in the first sentence would only

seem plausible to his former journalism teacher.

A 23-year-old Prairie View A&M University graduate who holds bachelor degrees in Mass Communication and Spanish, Gaither was selected as a presenter for a conference at Harvard University from April 14-16.

Gaither’s fully funded workshop titled, “A Black Creole Diary,” will feature a segment of his 90-minute documentary film at the Fourth Pan Collegiate Conference on the Mixed Race Experience which was co-sponsored by Wellesley College.

“This will be my first workshop session as a presenter and the beginning of my more formal academic

duties,” Gaither said.

“This will be an opportune chance for me to honor my professors and peers at PVAMU,” he added.

Gaither acknowledged his alma mater as he recognizes the importance of all of the people who contrib-

“(PVAMU) molded me to be academically fierce, but socially adaptable and amiable.”

-Eric Gaither

uted to his being.

The former PVAMU student indicated that he relies on his history and experi-

ences to guide most of his life’s endeavors.

In keeping with his appreciation of his past, Gaither’s documentary film, or “essay in motion and sound,” includes footage of even PVAMU students and employ-

ees who are believed to have African Creole ancestry.

Gaither said his motivation to delve into the significance and symbolism of African Creole culture developed when his grandfather, who was of black Louisiana Creole descent, died shortly before his high school graduation in 1994.

“I wanted to honor part of my family heritage while helping others throughout southeast Texas and south Louisiana embrace, internal-

ize and understand the significant impact of the African descended population, which arrived in Louisiana between the 18th and 19th centuries, on the various aspects of North American culture,” he said.

The opportunity to present his research at the Harvard conference surfaced from Gaither’s graduate studies and involvement in various cultural and ethnic activities.

Along with completing his thesis, “Louisiana Creoles in the African Continuum,” for a master’s degree in Liberal Studies at Dartmouth College, Gaither has completed a photography exhibit on Afro-Cuban culture through his international

See Ivy on page 15

Readers impressed by lessons learned in 'He say, She say'

Sheleah Hughes
Managing Editor

Well I have figured out that there are hundreds of novel readers on Prairie View’s campus. I mean we could start our own book club. It may not be as high class as Oprah’s but with time and hope maybe we’ll get there.

Over the last couple of years I have seen the trend in reading grow from the previously mentioned book club to the BET programming adaptation of Arabesque books.

Black Entertainment Television has ventured out, adopted love stories and made them into feature presentations that can be seen nearly every Friday on its cable network.

While the production or actors may not win any academy awards the plots of these books are deceiving, witty, humorous and can make anyone who has been in a relationship cry or laugh.

Although my latest book “He say, She say” is not an Arabesque book it can still capture the hearts of readers.

“He say, She say” looks at the acts of love from

both sides. Author, Yolanda Joe uses four believable characters to tell the story of friendship, family and love.

Sandra Mae Atkins, a twenty-five year-old sales executive has been worried about finding a good man for a long time. She’s college educated and threatened by societies vision that all African American men or either gay, in jail or in love with women of another race.

many she was forced to watch her mother be physically abused by her father. Her mother usually defended her father’s actions, claiming that she was so deeply in love that he could do no wrong.

Timothy James Willet Jr. is the man that changed classically Atkins’ life. This musician wins the heart of Atkins through his music. This is probably the way that he has won the heart, money and nearly everything else from other women.

T.J.’s dad, Speed is the other voice of Yolanda Joe. She uses him to guide the book. He is sometimes a voice of reason and other times a portrait of the future. This player has made mistakes and continues to make mistakes in his life. But this never stops him from experiencing true love.

“He say, She say” is a novel that opens the eyes of those who have been, will be or are in love. It plants the notion that mistakes happen and heartbreak is not such a scary thing.

It may not be a Pulitzer prize winner, but if I had my own book club like Oprah, I’d recommend it.

It plants the notion that mistakes happen and heartbreak is not such a scary thing.

Atkins’ best friend Beatrice Mae Thomas is a strong down to earth woman who takes nothing from anyone. Although she did not go to college right after high school, she is a smart woman who makes her living as a professional at bank. Thomas’ strong attitude about men stems from her parents relationship. Like

Texas from page 6

Texas Constitution.

This position is only third to the Lieutenant Governor and the active Governor.

Following tradition the President Pro Tempore is sworn in on a day when both the Governor and Lieutenant Governor are out of the state.

Before being sworn in, Ellis had served as the temporary governor for 31 days. He has become one of the longest serving President Pro Tempores in recent history.

Rodney Ellis graduated from Worthing High School in Houston, Texas.

Later he enrolled in Xavier University before attending Texas Southern University.

While attending the Lydon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and the University of Texas Law School, he gained hands on experi-

ence in the Texas government.

He worked as an aide to Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby and as a law clerk to Justice John C. Phillips on the Third Court of Appeals.

Later Ellis served as legal counsel to Texas Railroad Commissioner Buddy Temple and Chief of Staff to the late US Representative Mickey Leland.

In 1983, Ellis was elected to the Houston City Council and then he moved on to the Texas Senate.

Ellis has become a leader in education, civil rights, economic development, tax cuts and workforce development issues.

The summit continued later Saturday with panel discussions. “Generation X Speaks Out” allowed SGA members from state schools the chance to develop plans to solve the issues the face that generation of today.

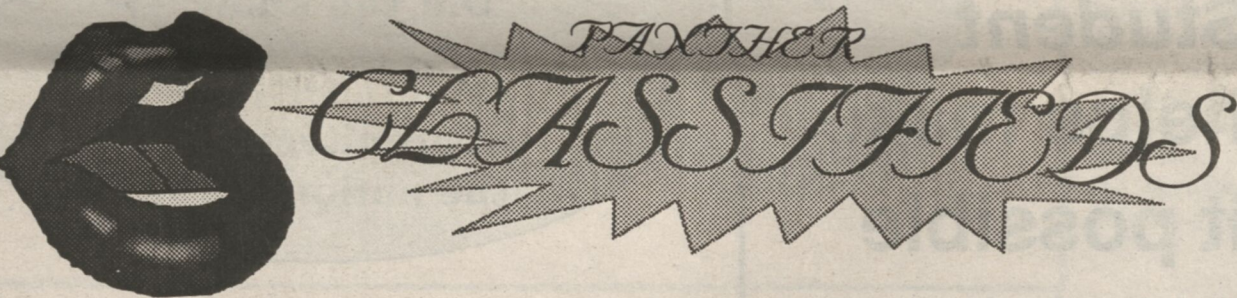
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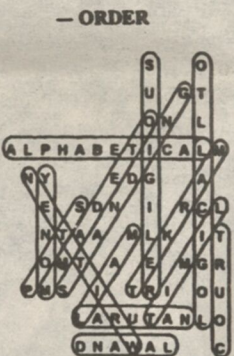
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O	N	T	H	E	F	R	I	T	Z	
P	R	E	Y	R	B	I	Q	U	I	T
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Editor's
Commentary

To Be or Not To Be... Changes in BET's line up frustrate, bore veiwers

When I was younger and my family first got cable television, I thought we were rich! We had ESPN, HBO, and even MTV. However, people in other areas of Dallas were able to get channels that we couldn't like BET. A few years later cable provider got rid of MTV and brought BET to our television screens.

At the time, BET was focused on bringing R&B and rap videos to society when other stations wouldn't. It provided access to videos of the songs that we listened to on the radio.

In the past few years, BET has attempted to broaden its horizons and turn away from just music videos. The station has picked up cancelled shows like 227, Amen, and Good Times. It has even ventured so far as to make movies out of books published by Arabesque Publishing. I

can appreciate a company trying to support Black business endeavors. After all, BET does stand for Black Entertainment Television. The problem is that it is lacking in the entertainment department.

How entertaining is a digitally created woman prancing around the screen being just as "ghetto" as she could possibly be? I find the character of "Cita" to be insulting as a Black woman. I do not, nor do I know many people who talk or act anything like she does. Talking loud, smacking your lips, and using slang for every other word does not qualify you as Black. It qualifies you as uneducated.

How entertaining are those Arabesque movies? Mediocre actors mixed with poor scripts and poor directors makes for a rather comedic attempt at drama. The underlying story line is usually a

good one, but every good book does not make a good movie.

"Hits," which airs every weekday afternoon, provides a minimal amount of comic relief. But after a few minutes of watching a man run around the country looking for people to make fun of, I am forced to turn the channel or slit my wrists.

And BET's Spring Bling was nothing short of a joke. Unsculpted women in thongs and men with "love handles" and beer bellies are not my idea of entertaining television.

For a while, Comic View was a favorite show of mine. Everyone likes to laugh, so an hour of famous comedians was a fabulous business move. But how many times can you hear the same joke? The reruns leave much to be desired, and the episodes filled with the good clips from the

best shows are getting old.

As I flip between MTV and BET in search of a good video, I can't help but notice the similarities in shows aired on both stations. MTV's "The Tom Green Show" features a man who walks the streets harrassing people about various issues. BET's "Hits" is basically the same thing. Both shows are corny, and I can't bring myself to watch either for more than five minutes, but it seems that "Hits" is just a copy of "The Tom Green Show."

Every year for the past five years or so, MTV has picked a vacation spot for Spring Break and produced almost all of its shows from that sunny location. Now we are presented with BET's Spring Bling. Am I the only one who sees the striking similarity? Originality and creativity are the keys that BET seems to be lacking.

If your weekend plans

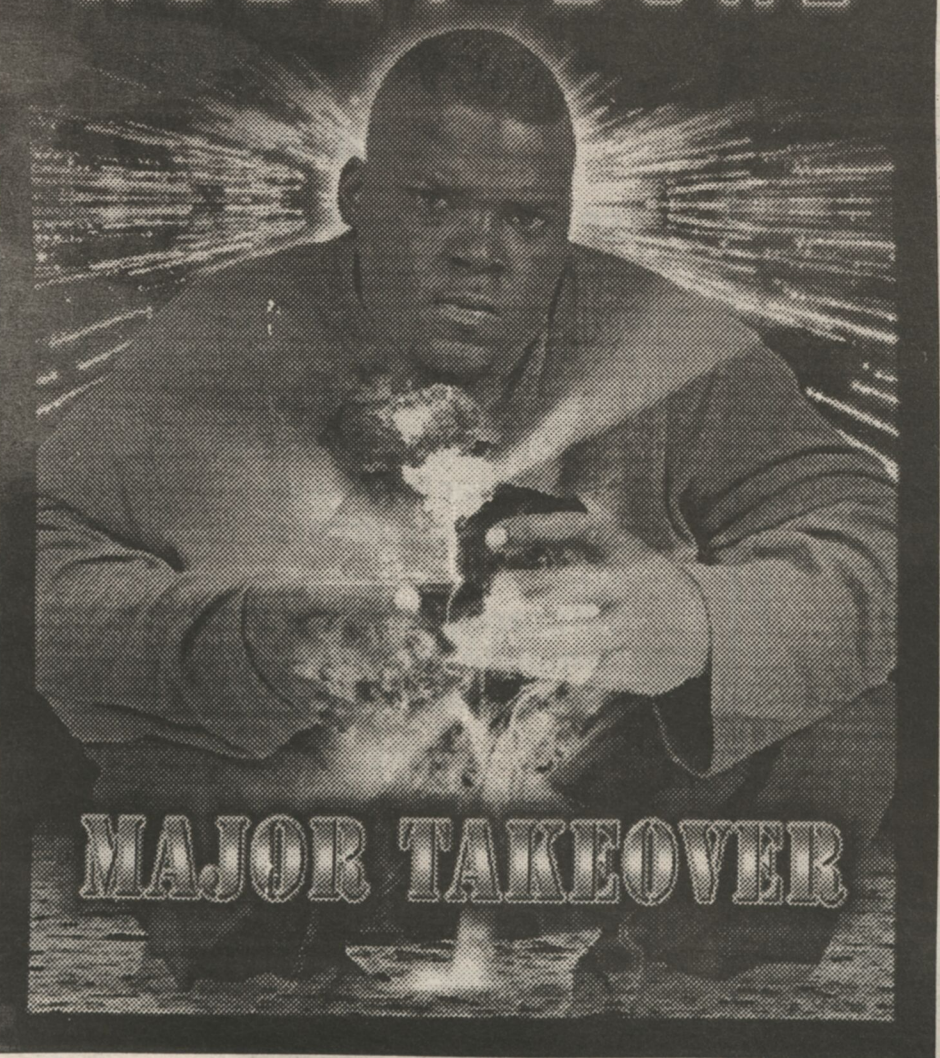
include spending a Saturday or Sunday afternoon watching videos on BET you're in for a rude awakening. The station is invaded by commercials every weekend with the exception of "Teen Summit" and the Arabesque movies.

I do not mean to condemn BET or its efforts at putting forth quality television for the Black community, but most of the time I'd rather watch MTV or nothing at all. Granted, BET is the only place that you can see some videos by Black artists, but everytime you turn on the tube it's the same thing - the D'Angelo or the Hot Boyz video.

By Tina M. Ellis
Entertainment Editor

In stores April 18, 2000

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Tamar

"Wobble, Wobble"
504 Boyz

"Bye, Bye, Bye"
'N Sync

"Give Me You"
Mary J. Blige

"What 'Chu Want"
Da Brat f/ Tyrese

"Stay or Let It GO"
Brian McKnight

"No Love"
Kevon Edmonds

"Best of Me"
Mya

"Shake Dem Haters Off"
Quint Black

"Where I Wanna Be"
Donnell Jones

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1989

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THE SKULLS

'The Skulls' intrigues audiences despite lack of special effects

Last weekend this movie was ranked third in box offices. *The Skulls* is a mind blowing story about a secret organization that was started years ago at Yale University.

It stars Joshua Jackson of "Dawson's Creek" and Paul Walker of *Varsity Blues* who plays his newly found brother. The movie shows how powerful people are in secret organizations.

There are no special effects or super star actors or actresses, but the story line is out of this world. It makes you want to watch what you say and do around people.

In the movie, Jackson was treated like a king and given gifts like money, women, and clothes to persuade him to join the organization. But there was one problem that caused his sublime bliss to be put on hold. He quickly finds out that his best friend was killed by the Skulls.

Throughout the movie he investigates the murder and is chased by the Skulls. He decides that he no longer wants to be a member of the Skulls, but they explain to him that

there is no way of getting out of being a Skull. He receives help from members and those who were there for him before he joined the group. Everyone and everything is against him except his friends.

The Skulls was alright but lacked a lot of things which could make the movie slightly better. It had no special effects at all - no blowing up of buildings or anything. But if you go in late you'll miss the whole point.

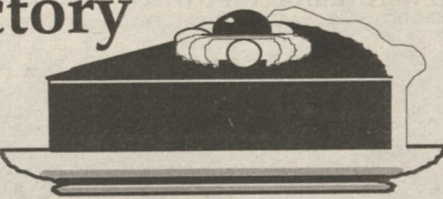
If you don't like the movies without cars blowing up, sex, and people coming up dead for no reason, don't spend your money. But if you like reading between the lines and a lot of arguing, it's a tight movie. This is not a movie you can sleep on.

If you don't have anything to do on the weekend, I would advise you to go see this movie. I give this a seven out of ten.

By Ketrick Williams
Panther Staff

Say "CHEESE!!!"

The Cheesecake Factory fills stomachs, adds smiles



With only one location in Houston, this restaurant lives up to its name. Known as The Cheesecake Factory, it serves over 200 menu items, but specializing in cheesecake.

My hat goes off to the chefs that create this wonderful "factory" of taste. From white chocolate raspberry truffle to triple chocolate brownie truffle, chocolate mocha java mousse or even fresh banana cream, the restaurant has something for everyone.

When not in the mood for their specialty, The Cheesecake Factory also serves dutch apple caramel streusel and other featured desserts. Of course, each appealing treat is always laced with a strawberry, mint or chocolate decorative trim.

Upon arrival in the

restaurant, located in at the Galleria, the customers are given a pager that will buzz and vibrate when their table is ready. During their wait, most customers spend their time looking at the display of prepared cheesecakes on hand in the entrance or browsing in nearby stores.

The ambiance is laid back yet surrounded by an atmosphere of casual elegance. Customer friendly waiters are always on hand to give their opinions on an appetizer or share their knowledge of what a menu item tastes like.

The restaurant covers all eating occasions, serving breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner seven days a week. Meals are always served in large portions. The

restaurant's menu includes many items such as pasta, sandwiches, seafood, steak, and "highly recommended" salads that are filling. The Cheesecake Factory even serves typical items such as pizza.

When spending a safe night out on the town, customers can enjoy the restaurant's wine list that tries to cover everyone's taste. Mai Tais and margaritas can also be enjoyed by those of legal age.

The restaurant also sells Cheesecake Factory apparel like sweatshirts, mugs and teddy bears.

By Santee's Bowers
Editor-in-Chief

20 Questions

1. How many of you have attempted to change your major to Information Systems or Architecture just to get a laptop?
2. Will the Sigma Gamma Rhos still sit with the Rho Meo's now that there are Juliets on the yard?
3. Since they're finally closing the MSC, have they decided what they're going to do with Taco Bell and KFC?
4. Has everyone used all of their points already?
5. Are they going to have the Mr. Prairie View Pageant anytime this year?
6. Are the Omegas and the Zetas having a party because the Deltas had a party with the Sigmas?
7. How many of you know that it is illegal to burn CDs?
8. What kind of a Probate Show only has one organization stepping?
9. Would you even want to whistle while you 'twurk'?
10. Did anybody see the "WANTED" poster offering \$50 to anyone who knows the whereabouts of Mr. and Miss Prairie View 1999?
11. Did President Hines really cancel classes Friday so he could go to the Beach Party in Galveston?
12. What possessed the Kappas to have the PV Beach Party in the student park?
13. And wouldn't the name "Beach Party" imply that there is a beach in the vicinity?
14. Who were the guys at the Rho Meo party in g-strings?
15. Why don't people want to date you until you are dating someone else?
16. Why do professors stress attendance when you're paying for the class?
17. What is the theme for Spring Fest?
18. Do any of you take 20 Questions seriously?
19. If so, why would you?
20. What do you think?

We want to know what you think. Please submit any questions you may have to The Panther, Rm. 114 in the MSC. Questions are printed at the discretion of The Panther.

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2000 football schedule tests mighty Panthers



By Ryan McGinty
Sports Editor

After looking at the tentative 2000 football schedule the athletic department has released, I am at a lost for words on how the schedule is set up. This schedule could make or break the football team when the season is over.

First, let me start off with the positives. Among certain athletic circles, some are saying that Prairie View has one of the hardest schedules in the SWAC and black college football.

If the SWAC was still eligible for the 1-AA playoffs and the Panthers won the SWAC championship, Prairie View's schedule definitely would get them strong consideration.

Now for the negatives, and there are plenty of them.

I assume we are getting the full allotment of athletic scholarships because some of the teams they have to play are football powerhouses.

Three of the schools on the schedule are perennial playoff contenders and one school participated in the 1-AA championship game a few years back. And this does not include the SWAC schools!

Another problem the schedule presents is that there are no more home games after Oct. 14.

If you were not fortunate to catch the Panthers in September or October, you would have to pack your bags in order to watch the team.

Road support will be thin for the team in 2000 because I doubt many fans will make the trek to Normal, Ill. or Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Here are some of the teams that could make or break the Panthers in 2000.

Texas Southern - The Tigers usually contend for the Western Division crown year in and year out. How the Panthers play against them usually sets the tone for the remainder of the season.

McNeese State - The Panthers make a return trip to Beaumont, which was the sight of the infamous band fight. McNeese State participated in the 1-AA championship game a few years ago and always fields a tough team each year. This game will see what the Panthers are made of.

Southern - Usually, the team plays defending SWAC champion SU very well. If the Panthers can get a play or two to fall their way, an upset is possible. However, the game will not be the main event due to the concerns of both schools' marching bands.

Illinois State - One of two Gateway conference members, the Panthers play this season. The Redbirds finished 11-3 last season and return a very powerful team. The Redbirds will be another team that will test the Panthers dearly.

Mississippi Valley - I am including them because the Delta Devils were five minutes from becoming the Panthers' first SWAC victim in 10 years.

Northern Iowa - This will be the Panthers last game of the season. Northern Iowa, who also goes by the Panthers, have had nine consecutive seasons with seven or more wins. The outcome of the game will depend on how the Panthers play during the season and motivation will become a key factor.

The Y2K football schedule will definitely show America what the Panthers are made of.

Panther tennis shoots for SWAC title
Men's and women's teams hope to win SWAC title, earn NCAA bid

By Ryan McGinty
Sports Editor

One of the best kept secrets on campus is the play of the men's and women's tennis teams. From their first match in February, both teams have progressed to the point where a SWAC title and NCAA bid is in sight.

Both teams, which are coached by Robert Vanderbilt, will participate next week in the annual SWAC tennis championships in Montgomery, Ala.

The winner of the championships will earn a bid to the NCAA tennis tournament which will be held in May.

The 2000 season has been a learning experience for both teams due to the abundance of new members. Throughout the season, the teams have learned from their mistakes and have become very competitive.

The Panthers proved their worth during the SWAC

roundup last month in Jackson, Miss.

Despite not having their number one seeded player available for singles play at the last roundup, the Panther men (4-8, 4-7 SWAC) still managed to pull out a win over Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

Even though the Panthers fell behind early in doubles play, they captured their singles matches to seal the victory.

When the championships roll around next week, the Panthers should be at full strength and ready to make a run for the title.

Team members include Solomon Pendleton, Lovell Darnell, Elvis Afamba, Vernon Hunter, Tremayne Scales, Desmond Thomas, Johnny Chapman and Ryan McGinty.

The Panther women (5-7, 5-6 SWAC) have also been a pleasant surprise this season.

The ladies entered last week's roundup and earned wins against Missis-

sippi Valley and Arkansas-Pine Bluff. The ladies have not missed a beat this season despite the presence of several new members.

The team looks to returning players Timberly Gilford, ChiQuia Robinson and Maya Jackson for leadership.

Other team members include Nicole Nelson, Latoya Lackey, Dana Fitch and Stephany Epps.

The team has adopted the phrase "enthusiasm" as its motto for the 2000 season.

Playing with a lot of enthusiasm will help both teams achieve the coveted SWAC tennis championship.

On Thursday afternoon, the Panthers will play host to Texas Southern in a tuneup match before they depart for Montgomery. All matches begin at 4 p.m.

"We are going to Alabama with winning in our minds," said Vanderbilt. "If the team stays focused and plays competitively, we can win the whole championship."

Upcoming PVU Sporting Events

Baseball

April 24 at Texas Christian (DH)

Softball

April 22 Wiley College (DH) 1 p.m.

Track

April 22 Baylor Relays

Tennis

April 19-21 SWAC Championships

Spring sports update

Panther football holds spring training

By Marlon Bennett
Panther Staff

The Panther football team has begun spring workouts under new leadership.

Rory Barnett, who is in his fourth season at Prairie View, has been named interim coach and will be in charge of spring workouts.

Barnett and his staff are feeling confident about the upcoming season.

After being involved in several close games during the 1999 season, the Panthers look to close the gap and make some noise in the SWAC.

Last season, the Panther football team went 2-8 overall and 0-4 in against

SWAC competition.

During the season, the Panthers won two of their home games and caused a lot of trouble for opposing SWAC teams.

The Panthers can look back to several games last season to build upon.

They lost a heart-breaking game to Mississippi Valley in the last quarter. The game denied the Panthers a chance at their first SWAC win in 10 years.

Another motivating factor the Panthers can build off of is the play of the team against SWAC powerhouse Southern University last season.

See **Spring** on page 15

Sports Spotlight

Ashley Thompson



photo by Gitonga M'Mbijewe

Age: 20

Hometown:
Houston, Texas

Fantasy Dinner:
Omar Epps
Morris Chestnut
Taye Diggs

Favorite Movie:
Neverending Story

Favorite Food:
Soul Food

Major:
Information Systems


"Accept yourself for who you are and not what anyone else thinks."
-Thompson

2000 Panther Football Schedule

Sept. 2	Texas Southern (Houston)*	Oct. 28	at Mississippi Valley*
Sept. 9	McNeese State (Beaumont)	Nov. 4	at Arkansas-Pine Bluff*
Sept. 16	Southern (TBA)*	Nov. 11	Bye Week
Sept. 23	Alabama A&M*	Nov. 18	at Northern Iowa
Sept. 30	Grambling State (Dallas)*		
Oct. 7	Alcorn State*		
Oct. 14	Alabama State (Homecoming)*		
Oct. 21	at Illinois State		


* denotes SWAC games

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THE FINAL WORD

Guest Commentary
Writer calls for the education of Black America

By Felicia Walker
Business Manager

With all the worries America had about Y2K and computer shutdowns, there are still some individuals who hold a different focus for the millennium. The way in which many people of color live today and the habits we consider popular are placing many of us in a critical condition.

As we watch entrepreneurs like the 'Cash Money Millionaires' make millions in

dan and her efforts as the first black woman to win a seat in the Texas Senate—not to mention a resident of Houston, Texas? Can we ever put aside FUBU merchandise and our obsession with the name brand clothing to learn about the accomplishments of religious leader Desmond TuTu or any other prominent figure in Black America? These and many others are the concerns that we as black people should have in the years to come.

There is a story about a man—a great man

who had a dream and desire to change not only America, but the world as a whole. He was born on Jan. 15, 1929 and was assassinated at the young age of 39. Civil rights leader Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in April 1968. He served as a father-figure for hundreds, as a believer for thousands, and a fighter for millions. To acknowledge this man only on a local highway, street corner or community center is a serious act of miseducation and disrespect.

After we study the life of such a dominate figure in black society, we have to ask ourselves, 'If this great man were alive today, would he feel as though his dreams for a better tomorrow had been answered?' Has the struggle finally come to an end or crossed over into a new trail?

Although slavery has passed, it is our belief that King would be a little upset to see Blacks ignoring or trying to forget their past, and constantly forgetting what many of our ancestors endured to allow us freedom on American soil. Little reminder is needed when thinking

"Let's go back to the days and raise our children with a value system, where on Sundays after church, families gathered around the eating table eating hearty soul food, laughing and most of all praying together."

-Felicia Walker

of the voyage from Africa to America—it was no cruise voyage. Even though many have the attitude that slavery is in the past, we as black youth are faced with the ongoing struggles of discrimination, prejudice, oppression and pain, just as they were years ago.

Evaluating King's dream that "our nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal'—where are we today? According to Ricki, Jerry and recent host of Forgive or Forget, Mother Love, we have a long way to go until men and women respect and love one another fully and equally.

It is the belief of many that King's eyes would be filled with tears as he watches black on black crime spreading across America, wondering when the time will come that children will stop killing children and having children to realize black does not kill black.

Would his eyes continue to be filled with tears as he watches another Black person tear away at his soul by shooting heroin, smoking crack and selling drugs? Let's go back to the days when we raised our children with a value system, where on Sundays

after church, families

gather around the table eating hearty soul food, laughing and most of all praying together.

If one message was sent out to every black man and woman in America, it should ask them to focus on the uplifting of our culture. The constant slandering of our people—by our people must stop. If we could pick up and read the Holy book more instead of clubbing seven days a week we would

see a change.

This message should also make a plea to educate ourselves against negative stereotypes and propaganda, and make an oath to increase our sense of pride as people of color.

There is more to life than the quick fix of money, sex and drugs. Let the year 2000 be a start of something new and not a continuing process of something old and harmful.

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